

ORIENTAL STUDIES TRIPOS Part II

Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Tuesday 2 June 2008 09.00 – 12.00

IS.14 ARABIC LITERATURE, 2

*Candidates should answer **THREE** questions.
All questions carry **equal** weight.*

*Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** Answer Book.*

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

*20 Page Answer Book x 1
Rough Work Pad*

**You may not start to read the questions
printed on the subsequent pages of this
question paper until instructed that you may
do so by the Invigilator.**

- 1) According to Maimonides, 'it is sometimes necessary to introduce such metaphysical matter as may partly be disclosed, but must partly be concealed'. To what extent does this describe Ibn Tufayl's method in *Hayy ibn Yaqzān*?
- 2) Explain the role of normative ethics in Rāzī's *al-Sīra al-falsafiyya*.
- 3) Give a Straussian reading of Fārābī's critique of *kalām* and *fiqh* in *Ihyā' al-'ulūm*.
- 4) Account for descriptions of the Ikhwān al-Safā' as Muslim Neoplatonists and as Isma'īlīs.
- 5) Based on your reading of the *Fasl al-maqāl*, is it feasible to argue that Ibn Rushd was a Straussian? Give reasons for your answer.
- 6) 'Ibn Khaldūn's portrayal of his meeting with Tamerlane allows us to understand his career as a politician.' Discuss.
- 7) Describe the literary techniques which, according to Straussians, the medieval Islamic philosophers used in their composition of the works you have read.
- 8) Give an overview of the problems involved in the composition of the history of Arabic philosophy. Can the history of Arabic philosophy be written, and if so, how? Give reasons for your answer.
- 9) Discuss the relationship between law, religion and philosophical ethics in at least two of the Arabic philosophical texts you have read.

END OF PAPER